GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:22
ANSWERED ON:22.02.2001
RESERVATION FOR WOMEN
RENUKA CHOWDHURY

Will the Minister of LAW , JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made during the last three months to bring about a consensus among the different political parties in Parliament to ensure smooth passage of the Bill providing for due representation of Women in the Legislatures ;

(b) the out-come of these efforts, indicating the details of amendments and the modifications, if any, to be made in the Bill; and (

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard.

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS AND SHIPPING(SHRI ARUN JAITLEY)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 22 dated 22.2.2001.

In consonance with its commitment to empower the women and as agreed to in principle, by most of the political parties in the meeting of leaders of parties/Groups in Parliament on 22.12.99 chaired by the Prime Minister, the Government introduced on 23.12.1999 the Constitution (Eighty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1999, seeking to provide that as nearly as one-third of the seats shall be reserved for women in the House of the People and Legislative Assemblies of States.

Though the notices for consideration and passing were given in the Budget Session, 2000 and Monsoon session, 2000, the Bill did not come up for consideration and passing in that House due to absence of consensus on the issue. Meanwhile, the Election Commission of India in an all party meeting called on 29.4.2000, among other proposals for electoral reforms, discussed the subject of `Representation of Women in Parliament and State Legislatures`.The proposal mooted by the Commission, which envisaged that the parties will put up the minimum agreed percentage of women candidates in order to continue to retain their recognition with the Election Commission, was also not able to generate the consensus. In order to hold discussion on the provisions of the aforesaid Bill, the Bill was listed for consideration and passing in that House on 21.12.2000 and 22.12.2000 during the Winter Session, 2000, but could not be considered. Thus the Government made sincere efforts to debate and discuss the Bill in the Houses of Parliament and to evolve consensus among all the Political Parties. However, consensus has continued to elude. The Government has done its duty by introducing the necessary legislation and it has an open mind on any suggestions which may come from the Hon`ble Members.